TO Syr who, so that loketh here for curtesy
And seth me seme as one pretendyng none
But as vnthought vppon thus sodenly
Approcheth the middes amōg you euerichone
And of you all seyth nought to any one
May thinke me rewd pretuing of What lorde
ye seme to be, and of what stately porte.
¶ But I beseche you in most humble wyse
To omitte displeasure and pardon me
My maner is to muse and deuyse
So that some tyme my selfe may cary me
My selfe knoweth not Where, and I assure ye
So hath my selfe done now, for our lorde wot
Where I am, or what ye be, I knowe not.
¶ Or whence I cam, or whyther I shall
All this in maner as vnknowen to me
But euyn as fortune guydeth my fote to fale
So wander I, yet wheres so euer I be
And whome or how many so euer I se
As one person to me is euerychone
So euery place to me but as one.
¶ And for that one persone euery place seke I
Whiche one ones founde I fynde of all the rest
Not one myssyng, and in the contrary
hat one absent, though that there were here prest
l the creatures lyuyng most and lest
t lackyng her I shulde and euer shall
as alone lyus she to me is all.
¶ And alone is she without comparyson
Concerning the gyftes gyuen by nature
In fauour fayrnes and porte as of person
No lyke beryth the lyke of that creature
For no tonge can attayne to put in vre

Her to discryue, for how can wordes expres
That thynge the full wherof no thought can ges.
And as it is a thinge inestimable
To make reporte of her beutyfully
So is my loue towarde her vnable
To be reportyd as who seyth ryghtly
For my loole seruyce and loue to that lady
Is gyuen vnder such haboundaunt fashion
That no tonge therof can make ryght relashion.
Wherin I suppose this well supposed
Unto you all, that syns she perceyuyng
As moch of my loue as can be disclosed
Cuyn of very ryght in recompensyng
She ought for my loue agayne to be louyng
For what more right to graunt when loue loue requyreth
Then loue for loue, when loue vought els desyreth.
But cuyn as farre wurs as otherwyse then so
Stande I in case in maner desperate
No tyme can tyme my sewt to ease my woe
Before none to erely and all tymes els to late
Thus tyme out of tyme mystymeth my rate
For tyme to bryngе tyme to hope of any grace
That tyme tymeth no tyme in any tyme or place.
Wherby tyll tyme haue tyme so farre extincte
That deth may determyne my lyfe thus dedly
No tyme can I reste alas I am so lynete
To greues both so greate and also many
That by the same I say and wyll verify
Of all paynes the most incomparable payne
Is to be a louer not louyd agayne.

The woman belouyd not louyng entreth.

Belouyd not louyng.

For as touching these wordes of comparyson

Whyche

Whiche ye haue seyd and wolde seme to veryfye
If it may please you to stande therupon
Hearyng and answeryng me paciently
I doubt not by the same incontinently
Yourselfe to see by wordes that shall ensue
The contrary of your wordes verifyed for true.

Louer not loued.

¶ Fayre lady pleaseth it you to repayre nere
And in this cause to shewe cause reasonable
Wherby cause of reformacion may appere
Of reason I must and wylbe reformable.

Louyd not louyng.

¶ Well syns ye pretende to be confyrmable
To reason in auoydyng circumstaunce
Brefely by reason I shall the truthe auaunce.
¶ Ye be a louer no whyt loued agayne
And I am loued of whome I loue nothyng
Then standyth our question betwene these twayne
Of louing not louyd, or louyd not louing
Which is the case most paynfull in sufferyng
Wherto I saye that the most payne doth moue
To those belouyd of whome they can not loue.

Louer not louyd.

¶ Those wordes approued loo, myghte make a chaunge
Of myne opinion, but verely
The case as ye put it I thynke more straunge
Then true, for though the belouyd party
Can not loue agayne, yet possybly
Can I not thynke, nor I thynke neuer shall
That to be louyd can be any payne at all.

Belouyd not louyng.

¶ That reason perceyuyd and receyuyd for trouth
From proper comparyson shulde clere confounde me
Betwene payn & no payne, no such comparison growelh

Then or I can on comparyson grounde me
To proue my cale paynefull ye haue fyrst bounde me
To which syns ye dryue me by your denyall
Marke what enlueth before farther tryall.
¶ I saye I am louyd of a certayn man
Whome for no sewt I can fauour agayne
And that haue I tolde hym syns his sewt began
A thousand tymes but euery tyme in vayne
For neuer seaseth his tonge to complayne
And euer one tale whiche I neuer can see
For euer in maner where I am is he.
¶ Nowe yf you to here one tyng euery where
Contrary to your appetyte sholde be led
Were it but a mouse lo sholde pepe in your ere
Or alway to harpe on a cruste of bred
How coulde you lyke such harpyng at your hed.

Louyng not louyd.

¶ Some what displeasaunt it were I not deny.

Louyd not louyng.

¶ Then some what paynfull as well sayd say I.
¶ Displeasure and payne be thinges toyntly anext
For as it is displeasaunt in payne to be
So it is paynefull in displeasure to be
Thus by displeasure in payne ye confes me
Wherby syns ye part of my payne do see
In my ferther payne I shall now declare
That payne by whiche with your payne I compare.
¶ Smale were the quantite of my paynfull smerte
Yf his tanglyng percyd no further then myne erys
But thorough myne erys directly to myne harte
Percyth his wordes euyn lyke as many sperys
By whiche I haue spent so many and suche terys
That were they all red as they be all whyte
The blood of my harte had be gone or this quyte.

¶ And

And almoſt in caſe as though it were gone
Am I except this ſewt take end ſhortely
For it doth lyke me euyn lyke as one
Shold offer me ſeruyce moſt humbly
With an axe in his hande, contynually
Beſechyng me gentylly that this nyght be ſped
To graunt hym my good wyll to ſtryke of my hed.
I alledge for generall this one ſimilitude
Auoydyng reherſall of paynes partyculer
To abreuiate the tyme and to exclude
Surpluſage of Wordes in this our mater
By whiche enſaumple yt ye conſydere
Ryghtly my caſe at leſt wyſe ye may ſee
My payne as paynfull as your payne can bee.
And yet for ſhorter ende put caſe that your payns
Were oft tymes more ſharpe and ſore in degre
Then myne is at any tyme yet wyll I proue playne
My payne at lenght ſufficient to match ye
Which proke to be true your ſelfe ſhall agre
Yf your affeccion in that I ſhall reſyght
May ſuffer your reaſon to vnderſtande ryght.
You ſtande in pleaſure hauynge youre loue in ſyght
And in her abſens hope of ſyght agayne
Kepyth moſt tymes poſſeſſyon of ſome delyght
Thus haue you oft tymes ſome way eaſe of payne
And I neuer no way for when I be remayne
In his preſens, I dedly payne I ſotayne
And abſent, halfe ded in feare of his retourne.
Syns preſens nor abſens abſenteth my payne
But alway the ſame to me is preſent
And that by preſens and hope of preſens agayne
Ther doth appere myche of your tyme ſpente
Out of payne me thynketh this conſequent
That my payne may well by wayne of the lenght

Compare

Compare with youre ſhorteſte payne of more ſtrengthe.

Louer not loued.

Mayſtres yf your long payne be no ſtronger
Then is your longe reaſon agaynſt my ſhorte payne
We lacke no lyckly hood to lyue much longer
Then he that wolde ſtryke of your hed ſo fayne
Yet leſt ye wolde note me your wordes to diſdayne
I am content to agree for a ſeaſon
To graunt and enlarge your latter reaſon.
Amitte by her preſens halfe my tyme pleaſaunt
And all your tyme as paynefull as in caſe can be
Yet your payne to be moſt, reaſon wyll not graunt
And for enſample I put caſe that ye
Stoode in colde water all a day to the knee
And I halfe the ſame day to myd leg in the fyer
Wolde ye chaunge places with me for the dyer.

Loued not louyng.

Nay that wolde I not be ye aſſuered.

Louer not loued.

Forſoth and my payne aboue yours is as yll
As fyre aboue water thus to be endewred
Came my payne but at tymes and. yours continue ſtylle
Yet ſholde myne many weys to whome can ſkyll
Shewe yours, in comparyſon betwene the twayne
Skantly able for a ſhadowe to my payne.
Felt ye but one pang ſuch as I fele many
One pang of diſpayre, or one pang of deſyre
One pang of one diſpleaſaunt loke of her eye
One pang of one worde of her mouth as in yre
Or in reſtraynt of her loue which I requyre
One pang of all theſe felt ones in all your lyfe
Sholde quayle your opinion and quenche all oure ſtryfe.
Which panges I ſay admitted ſhort as ye lyſt
And all my tyme beſyde pleaſaunt as ye pleaſe

Yet coulde

Yet coulde not the shortnes the sharpnes so reky
The percyng of my hart in the lest of all these
But much it ouermacheth all your displeasse
For no whit in effecte is your case displeasaunt
But to deny a thyng which ye lyst not to graunt.
¶ Or to here a sewter by dayly petition
In humble maner as wit can deuyse
Requyre a thyng so standing in condicion
As no portion of all his enterpryse
Without your consent can spede in any wyse
This sewt thus attempted neuer so long
Doubte ye no deth tyll your payne be more strong.
¶ Nowe syns in this mater betwene vs disputed
Myne admittance of youre wordes not withstandyng
I haue thus fully your part confuted
What can ye say nowe I come to denyeng
Your principle, graunted in my forsayeng
Which was this, by the presens of my lady
I graunted you halfe my tyme spent pleasauntly.
¶ Although myne affection ledyth me to consent
That her selde presens is my releke onely
Yet as in reason appereth all my torment
Byd by her presens and marke this cause why
Before I sawe her I felt no malydy
And syns I sawe her I neuer was fre
From twayne the greatest paynes that in loue be.
¶ Desyre is the fyrst vpon my fyrst syght
And despayre the nexte vpon my fyrst sewt
For vpon her fyrst answere hope was put to flyght
And neuer came syns in place to dispeut
Howe bryngeth then her presens to me any frewt
For hopeles and helpeles in flames of desyre
And droppes of despayre I smolder in fyre.
¶ These twayne beyng endeles syns they began

And both by the presens of her wholly
Legon and contynued, I wonder yf ye can
Speke any worde more, but yelde ymmedyately
For had I no mo paynes but these, yet clerely
A thousand tymes more is my greke in these twayne
Then yours in all the case by which ye complayne.

Loued not louyng.

That is as ye say but not as I suppose
Nor as the treuth is, which your selfe myght se
By reasons that I coulde and wolde disclose
Sauyng that I see such parcyalyte
On your parte, that we shall neuer agre
Unlesse ye wyll admyt some man indyfferent
Indifferently to heare vs, and so gyue iudgement.

Louer not loued.

Agreed, for though the knowlege of all my payne
Ease my payne no whyt yet shall it declare
Great cause of abashement in you to complayne
In counterfet paynes with my payne to compare
But here is no iudge mete, we must seke elles where.

Louyd not louyng.

I holde me content the same to condiscende
Please it you to set forth and I shall attende.

Here they go both out and the louer be-
louyd entreth with a songe.

Louer belouyd.

By comen experience who can deny
Impossybylyte for man to shewe
His inward entent, but by sygnes outwardly
As wrytyng, speche, or countenaūce, wherby doth growe
Outward perceyuyng inwardly to knowe
Of euery secrecy in mans brest wrought
Fro man vnto man the effect of eche thought.
These thiges wel weyd in many thinges shewe neve

In our

In our outwarde ſignes to ſhewe vs ſo that playne
Accordyng to our thoughtes wordes and ſygnes procede
For in outwarde ſygnes where menne are ſene to fayne
What credence in man to man may remayne
Wans inwarde mynde with outwarde ſygnes to fable
Way ſone be more comen than commendable.
¶ Much are we louers then to be commendyd
For loue his apparence diſſembleth in no wyſe
But as the harte felyth lyke ſygnes alway pretendyd
Who fayne in apparence are loues mortall enmyes
As in diſpayre of ſpede who that can myrth deuyſe
Or hauyng graunt of grace can ſhewe them as mowrners
Such be no louers but euyn very ſhorners.
¶ The true louers harte that can not obtayne
Is ſo tormented that all the body
Is euermore ſo compeld to complayne
That ſoner may the ſuffret hyde the fury
Of a feruent feuer, then of that malady
By any power humayne he poſſyble may
Hyde the leſte payne of a thouſand I dare ſay.
¶ And he who in louyng hath loth to ſuche lucke
That loue for loue of his loue be founde
Shalbe of power euyn as eaſely to plucke
The mone in a momet with a fynger to grounde
As of his ioy to encloſe the rebounde
But that the reflection therof from his harte
To his beholders ſhall ſhyne in eche patte.
¶ Thus be a louer in ioy or in care
All though wyll and wyt his eſtate wolde hyde
Yet ſhall his ſemblaunce as a dyale declare
Howe the clocke goeth which may be well applyed
In abrygement of circumſtaunce for a guyed
To leade you in fewe wordes by my behauour
To knowe me in grace of my ladyes fauour.

¶ For beyng a louer as I am in dede
And therto dispoſyd thus pleaſauntly
Is a playne apparence of my ſuch ſpede
As I in loue cowld wyſh and vndoubtedly
My loue is requited ſo louingly
That in euery thyng that may delyght in mynde
My witt can not wiſh it ſo well as I fynde.
¶ Which thing at full conſydred, I ſuppoſe
That all the whole world muſt agree in one voyce
I beyng beloued as I now diſcloſe
Of one beyng cheſe of all the hole choyce
Muſt haue incomparable cauſe to reioyce
For the hyeſt pleaſure that man may obtayne
Is to be a louer beloued agayne.

☞ Mother louer nor loued entreth.

☞ No louer nor loued.

¶ Nowe god you good euyn mayſter woodcock.

☞ Louer loued.

¶ Comeſt of rudeneſſe or lewdeneſſe that mock.

☞ No louer nor loued.

¶ Come whyrof it ſhall ye come of ſuch ſtock
That god you good euyn mayſter woodcock.

☞ Louer loued.

¶ This lokll by lyke hath loſt his witt.

☞ No louer nor loued.

¶ Nay nay mayſter woodcock not a whyt
I haue knowen you for a woodcock or this
Or els lyke a woodcock I take you a mys
But though for a woodcock ye deny the ſame
Yet ſhall youre wytte witneſſe you mete for that name

☞ Louer loued.

¶ Howe ſo?

☞ No louer nor loued.

¶ Thus lo.

I do perceyue by your formare proces
That ye be a louer wherto ye confes
your selfe beloued in as louing wyse
As by wit and wyll ye can Wythe to deuyse
Concludyng therin determinately
That of all pleasures pleasaunt to the body
The hyest pleasure that man may obtayne
Is to be a louer beloued agayne
In which conclusion before all this flock
I shall proue you playne as wyse as a Woodcocke.

Louer loued.

And me thynke this woodcocke is torned on thy syde
Contrary to curtsy and reason to vse
Thus rudely to rayle or any word be tryed
In proke of thy parte wherby I do refuse
To answere the same, thou canst not excuse
Thy foly in this, but yf thou wylt say ought
I stay to say better for this seyng is nought.

No louer nor loued.

Well syns it is so that ye be discontent
To be called fole or further matter be spent
Wyll ye gyue me leaue to call ye fole anone
When your selfe perceyueth that I haue proued you one.

Louer loued.

Ye by my soule and wyll take it in good worth.

No louer loued.

Now by my fathers soule then wyll we entyn forth
That parte rehersed of your seyng or this
Of all our debate the onely cause is
For where ye afore haue fastly affirmed
That such as be louers agayne be loued
Stande in most pleasure that to man may mous
That tale to be false truth shall truely proue.

Louer loued.

¶ What folke aboue those lyue moze pleasauntly.

No louer noz loued.

¶ What folke mary euyn such folke as am I.

Louer loued.

¶ Beyng no louer what mans may ye be.

No louer noz loued.

¶ No louer no by god I warraunt ye
I am no louer in such maner ment
As doth appeare in this purpose present
Foz as touchyng women go where I shall
I am at one poynt with women all
The smotest, the smyzkest, the smallest
The trewest, the trymest, the tallest,
The wysest, the wylyest, the wyldest,
The meryest, the manerlyest, the myldest,
The strangest, the strayghtest, the strongest,
The lustyest, the lest, oz the longest,
The rashest, the rudyest, the roundest,
The sagest, the salowest, the soundest,
The coyest, the curstest, the coldest,
The belyest, the bzyghtest, the boldest,
The thankfullest, the thynest, the thyckest,
The sayntlyest, the sewzest, the syckest,
Take these with all the reste and of euerychone
So god be my helpe I loue neuer one.

Louer loued.

¶ Then I beseche the this one thynge tell me
How many women thenkest thou doth loue the.

No louer noz loued.

¶ Syz as I be saued by ought I can pzoue
I am beloued euyn lyke as I loue.

Louers loued.

¶ Then as appereth by those wozdes rehersed
Thou art nother louer noz beloued.

No louer.

No louer nor loued.

¶ Nother louer nor beloued that is euen true.

Louer loued.

¶ Syns that is true I meruayle what can ensue
For profe of thy parte in that thou madest auaunt
Of both our estates to proue thyne most pleasaunt.

No louer nor loued.

¶ My parte for most pleasaunt may sone be gest
By my contynuall quyetyd rest.

Louer loued.

¶ Beyng no louer who may quyet be?

No louer nor loued.

¶ Nay beyng a louer what man is he
That is quyet.

Louer loued.

¶ Mary I.

No louer nor loued.

¶ Mary ye lye.

Louer loued.

¶ What paciens my frende ye are to hasty
Yf ye wyll paciently marke what I shall say
Your selfe shall perceyue me in quyet alway.

No louer nor loued.

¶ Say what thou wyll and I therin protest
To beleue no worde thou sayest most nor lest.

Louer loued.

¶ Thanne we twayne shall talke bothe in vayne I see
Except our mater awarded may be
By iudgement of some indyfferent herer.

No louer nor loued.

¶ Mary go thou and be an inquerer
And yf thou canst brynge one any thyng lyckly
He shalbe admitted for my parte quyckly.

Louer loued.

¶ Nowe by

Nowe by the good god I graunt to agree
For be thou aſſewred it ſcorneth me
That thou ſhuldeſt compare in pleaſure to be
Lyke me, and ſurely I promyſe the
One Way or other I wyll fynde redres.
¶ No louer nor loued.
¶ Fynde the beſt and uext way thy wit can ges
And except your nobs for malous do nede ye
Make breke returne a kelyſhyp ſpede ye.
☞ The louer loued goeth out.
☜ No louer nor loued.
¶ My merueyll is no more then my care is ſmall
What knaue this foole ſhall bryng beyng not perceyall
And yet be he falſe and a folyſh knaue to
So that it be not to muche a do
To bryng a daw to here and ſpeke ryght
I force for no man the worth of a myte
And ſyns my doubt is ſo ſmal in good ſpede
What ſhulde my ſtudy be more then my nede
Tyll tyme I perceyue this woodcock commyng
Wyl parte herof ſhulde pas euyn in mumming
Sauing for paſtyme ſyns I conſyder
He beyng a louer and all his mater
To depende on loue and contrary I
No louer by which all ſuch ſtanding by
As fauour my parte, may feare me to weyke
Agaynſt the louyng of this louer to ſpeyke
I ſhall for your confort declare ſuche a ſtory
As ſhall perfetly plant in your memory.
That I haue knowledge in louers laws
As depe as ſome dolyn of thoſe doting daws
Which tolde all ye whole fanſyes ſtyck nere me
Shall knowe it cauſeles in this caſe to feare me
For though as I ſhewe I am no louer now

Nor neuer haue ben yet shall I shewe you
How that I ones chaunced to take in hande
To fayne my selfe a louer ye shall vnderstande
Toward such a swetyng as by swete sent sauour
I knowe not the lyke in fashyon and fauour
And to begyn
At settyng in
Fyrst was her skyn
Whith smoth and thyn
And euery vayne
So clewe sene playne
Her golden heare
To see her weare
Her werying gere
Alas I fere
To tell all to you
I shall vndo you
Her eye so rollyng
Ech harte conterollyng
Her nose not long
Nor stode not wrong
Her finger typs
So clene she clyps
Her rosy lyps
Her chekes gossyps
So fayre so ruddy
It areth studdy
The hole to tell
It dyd excell
It was so made
That euyn the shade
At euery glade
Wolde hartes inuade
The paps so small
And rounde with all
The wast not myckyll
But it was tyckyll
The thygh the kne
As they sholde be
But suche a leg
A louer wold beg
To set eye on
But it is gon
Then syght of the lots
Fyrst hartes to the rote
And last of all sent Katheryns whele
Was neuer so round, as whas her hele
Alawt her harte and who coulde winne it
As for her hele do holde in it
Let ouer that her beauty was so muche
In pleasaunt qualytes her graces were such
For dalyaunt pastaunce pas where she sholde
No greater difference betwene lede and golde
Then betwene the rest and hes, and such a wyt

That no wyght I were myght matche her in it
If she had not wit to set wyse men to scole
Then shall my tale proue me a starke fole
But in this matter to make you mete to ges
Ye shall vnderstande that I with this maystres
Fyll late acquaynted and for loue no whyt
But for my pleasure to approue my wyt
Howe I coulde loue to this trycker dissemble
Who in dissymulyng was perfyt and nymble
For where or whan she lyst to gyue a mock
She coulde and wolde do it beyonde the nock
Wherin I thought that yf I tryed her
I shulde therbylyke my wyt the better
And yf she chaunced to tryp or tryse me
It sholde to learne wyt a good lesson be
Thus for my past tyme I dyd determyn
To mock or be mockt of this mockyng vermyn
For which her presens I dyd fyrst obtayne
And that obtayned forth with fell we twayne
In great acquentaunce and made as good chere
As we had ben acquaynted twenty yere
And I through fayre flatteryng behauour
Semyd anone so depe in her fauour
That though the tyme then so farre passed was
That tyme requyred vs alonder to pas
Yet coulde I no pasport get of my swettyng
Tyll I was full woed for the next dayes metyng
For sewrauns wherof I must as she bad
Gyue her in gage best iuell I there had
And after mych myrth as our wyttes coulde dyuyse
We parted and I the nexte morne dyd aryse
In tyme not to tymely such tyme as I coulde
I alowe no loue where slepe is not alowde
I was or I entred this iourney bownd.

Decke

Deckt very clenly but not very prowd
But trym must I be, for flobenly lobers
Haue ye woet well no place amonge louers
But I thus deckt at all poyntes poynt deuyce
At dore were this trull was I was at a tryce
Wherat I knocked her presens to wyn
Wherwhich it was opened and I was let in
And at my fyrst commyng my mynyon semeth
Very mery, but anone she mysdemed
That I was not merely disposed
And so myght she thynke, for I disclosed
No worde nor loke, but such as shewed as sadly
As I in dede inwardly thought madly
And so must I shewe for louers be in rate
Somtymes mery but most tymes passyonate
In geuyng thankes to her of ouer nyght
We set vs downe an heuy couple in syght
And therwithall I set a sygh such one
As made the forme shake which we both sat on
Wheruppon she without more wordes spoken
Fell in wepyng as her harte shulde haue broken
And I in secret laughyng so hartely
That from myne eyes came water plenteously
Anone I turned with loke sadly that she
My wepyng as watery as hers myght se
Which done these wordes anone to me she spake
Alas dere harte what whyght myght vndertake
To shewe one so sad as you this mornyng
Beyng so mery as you last euenyng
I so farre then the meryer for you
And without desert thus farre the sadder now
The selfe thynge quoth I whiche made me then gladde
The selfe same is thynge that maketh me nowe sadde
The loue that I owe you is originale

Grounde of my late ioy and present payne all
And by this meane, loue is euermore lad
Betwene two angels one good and one bad
Hope and drede whiche two be alway at stryfe
Whiche one of them both with loue shall rewle most ryfe
And hope that good angell fyrst parte of last nyght
Drawe drede that bad angell out of place quyght
Hope sware I sholde streyghte haue youre loue at ones
And drede this bad angell sware bloud and bones
That yf I wan your loue all in one howre
I sholde lose it all agayne in thre or fowre
Wherin this good angell hath lost the mastry
And I by this bad angell won this agony
And be ye sewer I stande now in suche case
That yf I lacke your contynued grace
In heuyn, hell, or yerth, there is not that he
Saue onelye god that knoweth what shall come on me
I loue not in rate all the common flock
I am no fayner nor I can not mock
Wherfore I beseche you that your rewarde
May witnesse that ye do my truthe regarde
Syr as touchyng mockyng quoth she I am fewer
Ye be to wyse to put that here in vre
For nother gyue I cause why ye so shulde do
Nor nought coulde ye wynne that way wurth an olde sho
For who so that mocketh shall surely stur
This olde prouerbe mockum moccabitur
But as for you I thynke my felfe assewred
That very loue hath you hyther alewred
For which quot she let hope hop vp agayne
And vaynquysh dred so that it be in vayne
To dred or to doubt but I in euery thing
As cause gyueth cause wylbe your owne derlyng
Swete harte quoth I after stormy cold smartes

Warm wordes in warm louers bring louers warm hartes
And so haue youre wordes warmed my harte euyn nowe
That dredles and doubtles now must I loue you
Anone there was I loue you and I loue you
Louely we louers loue eche other
I loue you and I for loue loue you
My louely louyng loued brother
Loue me, loue the, loue we, loue he, loue she
Depper loue apparent in no twayne can be
Mupte ouer the eares in loue and felt no ground
Had not swymmyng holpe in loue I had ben drounde
But I swam by the shore the bauntage to kepe
To mock her in lone semyng to swym more depe
Thus contynued we day by day
Tyll tyme that a moneth was passed away
In all the which tyme such awayt she toke
That by no meane I myght ones set one loke
Vppon any woman in company
But streyght way she set the fynger in the eye
And by that same aptnes in telousy
I thought sewer she loued me perfetly
And I to shewe my selfe in lyke louyng
Dissimiled lyke chere in all her lyke lokyng
By this and other lyke thynges then in hande
I gaue her mockes me thought aboue a thousande
Wherby I thought her owne tale lyke a bur
Stack to her owne back mockum mocctabitur
And vpon this I fell in deuysyng
To bringe to ende this ytell disgysyng
Wherupon sodaynly I stale away
And when I had ben absent halfe a day
My harte mysgaue me by god that bought me
That yf she myst me where I thought she sought me
She sewer wolde be madde by loue that she ought me

Wherin not loue, but pety so wrought me
That to returne anone I bethought me
And so returned tyll chaunse had brought me
To her chamber doze and harde I knocked
Knock sokt quoth one who the same vnlocked
An auncient wyse woman who was neuer
From this sayd swetyng but about her euer
Mother quoth I how doth my dere darlyng
Dede wretch cryed she euyn by thyne absentyng
And without no wordes the doze to her she shyt
I standyng without halfe out of my wyt
In that this woman sholde dye in my faute
But syns I coulde in there by none assawte
To her chamber wyndowe I gat about
To see at the lest way the cors layd out
And there lokyng in by godes blessyd mother
I sawe her naked a bed with an other
And with her bedfelowe laught me to scorne
As merely as euer she laught beforne
The which when I saw, and then remembryd
The terryble wordes that mother brendryd
And also bethought me of euery thyng
Shewed in this woman true loue betokenyng
My selfe to see serued thus prately
To my selfe I laughed euyn hartely
With my selfe consyderyng to haue had lyke spede
yf my selfe had ben a louer in dede
But nowe to make sory matter wherby
I may take my leue of my loue honestly
Swete harth quoth I ye take to much vpon ys
No more then becommes me knowe thou well quoth she
But thou hast taken to much vpon the
In takyng that thou toke in hande to mock me
Wherin from begynnyng I haue sene the yet

Lyke as a foole myght haue lettyd in a net
Beleuyng hymselfe saue of hymselfe onely
To be perceyuyd of no lyuyng body
But well saw I thyne entents and begynnyng
Was to bestow a mock on me at endyng
When thou laughedest dissymulyng a wepyng harte
Then I with weppynge eyes played euyn the lyke parte
Wherwith I brought in moccum moccabitur
And yet thou beyng a long snowted cur
Cowlde no whyt smell that all my meanyng was
To gyue mock for mock as now is come to pas
Which now thus passed yf thy wit be handsome
May defende the from mockes in tyme to come
By clappyng fast to thy snowt euery day
Moccum moccabitur for a nosegay
Wherwith she start vp and shyt her wyndowe to
Which done I had no more to say nor do
But thynke my selfe or any man elles a foole
In mockes or woyles to set women to scoole
But now to purpose wherfore I began
All thaugh I were made a foole by this woman
Concernyng mockyng yet doth this tale approue
That I am well seue in the arte of loue
For I entendyng no loue but to mock
Yet coulde no louer of all the hoole flock
Circumstaunce of loue disclose more nor better
Then dyd I the substaunce beyng no greater
And by this tale afore ye all may see
All though a louer as well loued be
As loue can deuyse hym for pleasaunt spede
Yet two displeasures iealousy and drede
Is myxt with loue wherby loue is a drynk mete
To gyue babes for wormes for it drynketh bytter sweete
And as for this babe our louer in whose hed

By a frantyke worm his opinion is bred
After one draught of this medsyn mynystryd
In to his brayne by my brayne apointyd
Reason shall so temper his opinion
That he shall see it not worth an onyon
And yf he haue any other thynge to ley
I haue to conuynse hym euery way
And syns my parte now doth thus well appere
Be ye my partyners now all of good chere
But sylence euery man vpon a payne
For mayster woodcock is nowe come agayne.

☞ The louer loued entreth.

Louer loued.

¶ She olde seyng seyth he that seketh shall fynde
Which after long sekyng true haue I founde
But for suche a fyndyng my selfe to bynde
To such a sekyng as I was now bounde
I wolde rather seke to lesse twenty pounde
Howe be it I haue sought so farre to my payne
That at the laste I haue founde and broughte twayne.

☞ The louer not loued, and loued not louyng entreth.

No louer nor loued.

¶ Come they a horse backe?

Loner loued.

¶ Nay they come a fote
Whiche thou myghte see here, but for this greate myste

No louer nor loued.

¶ By iys and yet see I thou blynde balde cote
That one of those twayne myght ryde yf he lyst.

Louer loued.

¶ How?

No louer nor loued.

¶ Mary for he ledyth a nag on his fyst

Maystres

Mayſtres ye are welcome, and welcome ye be.

Loued not louyng.

Nay welcome be ye for we were here before ye.

No louer nor loued.

Ye haue ben here before me before now
And now I am here before you
And now I am here behynde ye
And now ye be here behynde me
And now we be here euyn both to gether
And now be we welcome euyn both hyther
Syns now ye fynde me here with curtsy I may
Byd you welcome hyther as I may say
But lettyng this alyde, let vs set a broche
The mater wherfore ye hyther approche
Wherin I haue hope that ye both wyll be
Good vnto me, and eſpecyally ye
For I haue a mynde that euery good face
Hath euer ſome pyte of a poore mans caſe
Beyng as myne is a mater ſo ryght
That a fole may iudge it ryght at fyrſt ſyght.

Louer not loued.

Syr ye may well doubt how my wit wyll ſerue
But my wyll from ryght ſhall neuer ſwarme.

Loued not louyng.

Nor myne, and as ye ſew for helpe to me
Lyke ſewt haue I to ſewe for helpe to ye
For as much nede haue I of helpe as you.

No louer nor loued.

I thynke well that here hast but tell me how.

Loued not louyng.

The caſe is this, ye twayne ſeme in pleaſure
And we twayn in payne which payne doth procure
By comparyſon betweene hym and me
Is great a conflyct which of vs twayn be

In greatest payne, as is betwene ye twayne
Whiche of you twayne in most pleasure dothe remayne
Wherin we somewhat haue here debated
And both to tell trueth so gredyly grated
Upon affection eche to our owne lyde
That in conclusion we must nedes prouyde
Some suche as wolde and coulde be indyfferent
And we bothe to stande vnto that iudgement
Wherupon for lacke of a iudge in this place
We sought many places and yet in this case
No man coulde we mete that medyll wyll or can
Tyll tyme that we met with this gentylman
Whome in lyke errand for lyke lack of ayd
Was dryuen to desyre our iudgement he sayd.

¶ Louer loued.

¶ Forsoth it is so I promyse playne
They twayn betwen vs twayn geuyng iudgemēt plaine
We twayn betwen thē twayn shuld iudge ryght again.

¶ No louer nor loued.

¶ That promysse to performe I not disdayne
For touchyng ryght as I am a ryghteous man
I wyll gyue you as much ryght as I can.

¶ Loued not louyng.

¶ Nothyng but ryght desyre I you among
I wyllyngly wyll nether gyue nor take wronge.

¶ No louer nor loued.

¶ May in my consciens I thynke by this boke
Your consciens wyll take nothyng that commeth a croke
For as in consciens what euer ye do
Ye nothyng do but as ye wolde be done to
O hope of good ende, o Mary mother
Maystres one of vs may nowe helpe a nother
But syr I pray you some mater declare
Wherby I may knowe in what grefe ye are.

¶ Louer nat

Louer not loued.

I am a louer not loued which playne
Is dayly not dolefull but my dedly payne.

No louer nor loued.

A louer not loued haue ye knyt that knot.

Louer not loued.

Yee forsoth

No louer nor loued.

Forsoth ye be the more sot
Nowe maystres I hartely beseech ye
Tell me what maner case your case may be.

Loued not louyng.

I am beloued not louyng wherby
I am not in payne but in tormentry.

No louer nor loued.

Is this your tormentour god turne hym to good.

Loued not louyng.

May there is another man one me as wood
As this man on an nother woman is.

No louer nor loued.

Yee thynke them both mad and so do I by lys
So mot I thryue but who that lyste to marke
Shall perceyue here a pratty peyche of warke
Let vs fall somewhat in these partes to skannyng
Louyng not loued, loued not louyng
Loued and louyng, not louyng nor loued
Wyll ye see these foure partes well ioyned
Louyng not loued, and loued not louyng
Those partes can ioyne in no maner rekenyng
Louyng and loued, loued nor louer
These partes in ioynyng in lyke wyse dyffer
But in that ye loue ye twayne ioyned be
And beyng not loued ye ioyne with me
And beyng no louer with me ioyneth she

And beyng beholden with her toyne ye
Had I a toyner with me toyned toyntly
We toyners shulde toyne toynt to toynt quyckly
For fyrst I wolde parte these partes in seses
And ones departed these parted peses
Parte and parte with parte I wolde soo parte lyke parte
That eche parte shulde parte with quyet harte.

Louer not loued.

Syr syns passeth your power that parte to play
Let passe, and let vs partly nowe assay
To bryngе some parte of that purpose to ende
For which all parties yet in vayne attende.

Loued not louyng.

I do desyre the same and that we twayne
May fyrste be harde that I may knowe my payne.

Louer loued.

I graunte for my parte by fayth of my body
Why where the deuyll is this horeson nody.

No louer nor loued.

I neuer in tuskyce but euer more
I vse to be shryuen a lyttell before
And nowe syns that my confessyon is done
I wyll departe and come take penaunce sone
When cõsciens prycketh consciens must be serchte by god
In dischargyng of consciens or els god forbod
Which maketh me mete whē cõsciens must come in place
To be a iudge in euery comen case
But who may lyke me his auaunsement auaunt
Nowe am I a iudge and neuer was settaunt
Which ye regarde not much by ought that I see
By any reuerence that ye do to me
May yet I prayse women when great men go by
They crowch to the grounde loke here how they ly
They shall haue a beck by saynt Antony

But alas

But alas good mayſtres I cry̆e you mercy
That you are vnanſwered but ye may ſe
Though two tales at ones by two eares harde maye be
Yet can not one mouth two tales at ones anſwer
Which maketh you tary but in your mater
Syns ye by haſt in hauyng ferdeſt home
Wolde fyrſt be ſped of that for which ye come
I graunt as he graunted your wyll to fulfyll
Tou twayne to be harde fyrſt, begyn when you wyll.

Louer not loued.

As theſe twayne vs twayne now graunt fyrſt to byeke
Syns twayne to be harde, at ones can not ſpeke
I now deſyre your graunt, that I may open
Fyrſt tale which now is at poynt to be ſpoken
Which I craue no whyt my parte to auaunce
But with the pyt to auoyde circumſtaunce.

Loued not louyng.

Speke what and whan ſo euer it pleaſe you
Tyll reaſon wyll me, I wyll not diſpleaſe you.

Louer not loued.

Syns other her is a very weyke brayne
Or ſhe hath yf any a very weyke payne
For I put caſe that my loue I her gaue
And that for my loue, her loue I dyd craue
For which though I dayly ſew day by day
What loſſe or payne to her yf ſhe ſay nay.

No louer nor loued.

Yes by ſaynt Mary ſo the caſe may ſtande
That ſome woman had leuer take in hande
To ryde on your errand on hundreth myle
Then to ſay nay one Pater noſter whyle.

Louer not loued.

Yet ye on her parte any payne deſyne
Which is the more paynfull her payne or myne,

 No louer

No louer nor loued.

Your payne is moste yf she say nay and take it
But yf that she say nay and forsake it
Then is her payne a great waye the greater.

Loued not louyng.

Syr ye alledge this nay in this mater
As though my denyall my sewter to loue
Where all or the most payne that to me doth moue
Wherin the treuth is a contrary playne
For though to ofte spekyng one thyng be a payne
Yet is that one worde the full of my hopyng
To bryng his hopyng to dispayre at endyng
Thus is this nay which ye take my most grefe
Though it be paynfull yet my most relefe
But my most payne is all an other thyng
Which though ye forget or hyde by dyssymylyng
I partely shewed you, but all I coulde nor can
But maysters to you with payne of this man
That payne that I compare is partely this
I am loued of one whome the treuth is
I can not loue, and so it is with me
That from hym in maner I neuer can flee
And euery one worde in sewt of his parte
Pyps through myne eares and rons throughe my harte
His gastfull loke so pale that burneth I
Dare for myne eares cast towarde hym an eye
And whan I do that eye my thought presentyth
Streyghte to my harte and thus my payne augmentyth
One tale so ofte alas and so importune
His exclamacions somtyme on fortune
Some tyme on hymselfe some tyme vpon me
And for that thyng that yf my deth shoulde be
Brought streyght in place except I were content
To graunt the same yet coulde I not assent

And he

And he seyng this yet sealyth not to craue
What deth coulde be worle then this lyfe that I haue.
Louer not loued.
This tale to purpose purporteth no more
But syght and hearyng complaynt of his sore
Is onely the greke that ye do susteyne
Alas tender hart syns ye dye in payne
This payne to perceyue by syght and hearyng
Howe coulde you lyue to knowe our payne by feleyng
Marke well this question and answer as ye can
A man that is hanged or that mans hangman
Whiche man of those twayne suffereth most payne.
Loued not louyng.
Ye that is hanged.
No louer nor loued.
By the masse it is so playne.
Louer not loued.
Well sayd for me, for I am the sufferer
And ye the hangman vnderstande as it were
These cases vary in no maner a thyng
Sauyng this serues in this maunes hangyng
Comenly is done agaynst the hangmans wyll
And ye of delyghtfull wyll, your louer kyll.
Loued not louyng.
Of delyghtfull wyll, nay that is not so
As ye shall perfetly perceyue or we goo
But of those at whose hangyng haue hangman by
Howe many haue ye knowen hang wyllyngly.
No louer nor loued.
Nay neuer one in his lyfe byr lady.
Loued not louyng.
In this lo your case from our case doth vary
For ye that loue where loue wyll take no place;
Your owne wyll is your owne leder a playne case

And no

And not onely vncompelled without alewre
But sore against her wyll your sewt ye endewre
Now syns your wyll to loue dyd you procure
And with that wyll, ye put that wyll in vre
And now that wyll, by wit seth loue such payne
As wytty wyll wolde wyll loue to refrayne
And ye by wyll that loue in eche condicion
To extinct, may be your owne phisicion
Except ye be a foole or wolde make me one
What seyng cowd set a good ground to syt on
To make any man thynke your payne thus strong
Makyng youre owne salue youre owne sore thus long.

Louer not loued.

¶ Maystres mych parte of this proces purposed
Is matter of treuth truely disclosed
My wyll without her wyll brought me in loue
Which wyll without her wyll doth make me houe
Upon her grace to see what grace wyll proue
But where ye say me wyll may me remoue
As well from her loue, as wyll brought me to it
That is false my wyll can not wyll to do it
My wyll as farre therin out weyth my power
As a sow of led out weyth a saforne flowre.

Loued not louyng.

¶ Your wyl out welth your power then wher is your wit
I merueyll that euer ye wyll speke it.

Louer loued.

¶ Nay merueyll ye maystres therat no whyt
For as farre as this poynt may stretch in verdyt
I am clerely of this mans opinion.

No louer nor loued.

¶ And I contrary with this mynion.

Louer loued.

Then be we come to a demurrer in lawe

No louer

No louer [illegible] loued.

¶ Then be ye come [illegible] woodcock to a daw
And by god it is no small [illegible]nyng brother
For me to turne one wylde foole to a nother.

Louer not loued.

¶ Nay maysters I hartely pray you both
Bannysh contention tyll ye see howe this goth
I wyll repet and answer her tale forthwich
The pyt for your part wherof pretendyth
A profe for your payne to be more then myne
In that my wyll not onely dyd me enclyne
To the same but in the same by the same wyll
I wyllyngly wyll to contynue styll
And as wyll brought me and kepeth in this bey
When I wyll ye say, wyll wyll bryng me awey
Concludyng therby that yf my payne were
As great as yours that I sholde suerly bere
As great and good wyll to flee my loue thus ment
As do ye your sewters presens to absent.

Loued not louyng.

¶ This tale sheweth my tale perseyued euery dell.

Louer not loued.

¶ Then for entre to answere it as well
Answere this put case ye as depely nowe
Dyd loue your louer as he doth loue you
Shulde not that louyng suppose ye redres
That payne which lack of louyng doth posses.

Loued not louyng.

¶ Yes

Louer not loued.

¶ Syns loue gyuyn to hyme gyueth your self ease than
Except ye loue payne, why loue ye not this man.

Loued not louyng.

¶ Loue hym nay as I sayd must I streyght chose

To loue hym or els my hed here to lose
I knowe well I coulde not my lyfe to saue
Wythlouyng wyll graunt hym my loue to haue.

Louer not loued.

I thynke ye speke truely for wyll wyll not be
forced in loue wherfore the same to ye
Syns this is to you such difficulte
Why not a thyng as dyfficult to me
To wyll the let of loue where wyll my loue hath set
As you to wyll to let loue where wyll is your let.

Loued not louyng.

Well sayd and put case it as harde nowe be
for you to wyll to leue her, as for me
To loue hym, yet haue ye aboue me a meane
To learne you at length to wyll to leaue loue cleane
Which meane many thousandes of louers hath brought
From right feruent louyng to loue right nought
Whiche long and oft approued meane is absens
Wherto when ye wyll ye may haue lycens
Whiche I craue and wysche and can not obtayne
for he wyll neuer my presens refrayne.

Louer not loued.

This is a medecyn lyke as ye wolde wyll me
for thynge to kewre me the thyng that wold kyll me
for presens of her, though I selde whan may haue
Is soole the medecyn that my lyfe doth saue
Her absens can I with as yll wyll wyll
As I can wyll to leue to loue her styll
Thus is this wyll brought in insydently
No ayde in your purpose worth tayle of a fly
And as concernyng our principall mater
All that ye lay may be layd euyn a water
I wonder that shame suffereth you to compare
With my payne, syns ye are dryuen to declare

That

That all your payne is but syght and hearyng
Of hym that as I do dyeth in payne kelyng
O payne vpon payne what paynes I susteyne
No crafte of the deuyll can expresse all my payne
In this body no lym, ioynt, senow, nor veyne
But martreth echo other, and this brayne
Chefe enmy of all by the inuentyng
Wyne vnsauery sewte to her discontentyng
My speakyng, my hearynge, my lokyng, my thynkynge
In sytteynge in, standyng, in wakyng, or wynkyng
What euer I do, or where euer I go
My brayne and myschap in all these do me wo
As for my senses eche one of all fyue
Wondreth as it can to fele it selfe a lyue
And than hath loue goten all in one bed
Hym selfe and his seruauntes to lodge in this hed
Vayne hope, dispayre, drede, and audacite
Hast, wast, lust without lykyng or lyberte
Dilygence, humylyte, trust, and yelousy
Desyre, pacyent sufferaunce, and constansy
These with other in this hed lyke swarmes of bees
Styng in debatyng theyr contrarietees
The venym wherof from this hed distylleth
Downe to this brest and this hart it kylleth
All tymes in all places of this body
By this distemperaunce thus distempored am I
Sheueryng in colde and yet in hete I dye
Drowned in moysture parched perchment drye.

No louer nor loued.

Colde hote moste drye all in all places at ones
Mary syr this is an agew for the nones
But or we gyue iudgement I must serch to vew
Whether this euydens be false or trew
May saude skyll your part shall proue neuer the wars

To by fayne fauour here is a whot ars
Let me fele your nose, nay fere, not man be bolde
Well though this ars be warme and this nose colde
Let these twayne by attorney brought in one place
Are as he seith colde and whot both in lyke case
O what payn drought is see how his dry lyps
Smake for more moyster of his warme moyst hyps
Breath out, these eyes are dull but this nose is quycker
Here is most moystuer, your breath smelleth of lycker.

Loued not louyng.

¶ Well syns ye haue opened in this tale tellyng
The full of your payne for spede to endyng
I shall in fewe wordes suche one question disclose
As yf your answere gyue cause to suppose
The hole of the same to be answered at full
We nede no iudgement for yelde my selfe I wull
Put case this man loued a woman such one
Who were in his lykyng the thyng alone
And that his loue to her were not so myckyll
But her fansy toward hym were as lyttyll
And that she hyd her selfe so day and nyght
That selde tyme whan he myght come in her syght
And then put case that one to you loue dyd here
A woman that other so vgly were
That eche kys of her mouthe called you to gybbes feste
Or that your fancy abhorred her so at lest
That her presens were a swete to suppose
As one shulde present.

No louer nor loued.

¶ A torde to his nose.

Loued not louyng.

¶ Ee in good fayth, wherto the case is this
That her spytfull presens absent neuer is
Of these two cases yf chaunce shulde dryue you

To chose

To chose one, which wolde ye chuse tel trouth now
What ye study.

No louer nor loued.

¶ Tary ye be to gredy
Men be not lyke women alway redy.

Louer not loued.

¶ In good soth to tell treuth of these cases twayne
Which case is the wurst is to me vncertayne.

Loued not louyng.

¶ Fyrst case of these twayne I put for your parte;
And by the last case apereth myne owne smarte
Ef they proced with this fyrst case of ours
Then is our mater vndoubtedly yours
And yf iudgement passe with this last case in fyne
Then is the mater asewredly myne
Syns by these cases our partes so do seme
That whiche is most paynefull youre selfe can not deme
Ef ye now wyll all circumstaunce eshew
Make this question in these cases our yssew
And the payne of these men to abreuyate
Set all our other mater as frustrate.

Louer not loued.

¶ Agreed.

Loued not louyng.

¶ Thenfurther to abredge your payne
Syns this our yssew apeareth thus playne
As folke not doubtyng your couscience nor connyng
We shall in the same let passe all resonyng
Yeldyng to your iudgement the hole of my parte.

Louer not loued.

¶ And I lykewyse myne with wyll and good harte.

No louer nor loued.

¶ So lo make you low curtsy to me now
And streyght I wyll make as lowe curtsy to you

May stande ye nere the vpper ende I pray ye
For the neyther ende is goood inough for me
Your cases which enclude your greefe eche whit
Shall dwell in this hed.

Louer loued.

And in myne but yet
Or that we herein our iudgement publysh
I shall desyre you that we twayne may fynysh
As farre in our mater towarde iudgement
As ye haue done in yours to the entent
That we our partes brought to gether thyther.
May come to iudgement fro thens to gyther.

No louer nor loued.

Wyr lady syr and I desyre the same.

Loued not louyng.

I wolde ye began.

Louer not loued.

Begyn then in goddes name.

Louer loued.

Shall I begyn.

No louer nor loued.

Syns I loke but for wynnyng
Gyue me the ende and take you the begynnyng.

Louer loued.

Who shall wynne the ende, the ende at ende shall try
For my parte wherof nowe thus begyn I
I am as I sayd a beloued louer
And he no louer nor beloued nother
In whych two cases he maketh his auaunt
Of both our partes to proue his most pleasaunt
But be ye assuered by aught I yet se
In his estate no maner pleasure can be.

No louer nor loued.

Yes two maner pleasures ye must nedes confes

Fyrst

Fyrst I haue the pleasure of quyetnes
And the seconde is I am contented.

Louer loued.

That seconde pleasure now secondly inuented
To compare with pleasure by contentacyon
Is a very seconde ymagynacyon.

No louer nor loued.

Then shewe your wit for proffe of this in hande
Howe may pleasure without contentacion stande.

Lourr loued.

Pleasure without contentacyon can not be
But contentacyon without pleasure we se
In thynges innumerable euery day
Of all whyche marke these whych I shall nowe ley
Put case that I for pleasure of some frende
Or some thyng which I longed to se at ende
Wolde be content to ryde thre score myle this nyght
And neuer wolde bayte nor neuer alyght
I myght be ryght well content to do this
And yet in this doyng no pleasure there is
Wherefore ye by pacyent sufferaunce
May be contented with my myschaunce
The losse of your chylde frende or any thyng
That in this world to you can be longyng
Wherin ye contented neuer so well
Yet is your contentacyon pleasure no dell.

No louer nor loued.

These two examples by ought that I se
Be no thyng the thynges that any thyng touch me
With deth of my chylde my beyng contented
Or payne with my frende wyllyngly assented
Is not contentacyon voluntary
For that contentacyon cometh forceably
But my contentacyon standeth in such thyng

As I

As I wolde fyrst wysh yf it went by wyshyng
Louer loued.

¶ Syr be ye contented euen as ye tell
Yet your contentacion can nother excell
Nor be compared egall to myne estate
For touchyng contentacyon I am in rate
As hyely contented to loue as ye se
As ye to forbere loue can wysh to be
Had I no more to say in this argument
But that I am as well as you content
Yet hath my parte now good approbacyon
To match with yours euen by contentacyon
But contentacyon is not all the thyng
That I for my loue haue in recompensyng
Aboue contentacion pleasures felyng
Haue I so many, that no wyght lyuyng
Can by any wyt or tonge the same reporte
O the pleasaunt pleasures in our resorte
After my beyng from her any wyther
What pleasures haue we in commyng to gyther
Eche tap on the grounde towarde me with here foot
Doth bathe in delyght my very harte rote
Euery twynke of her aluryng eye
Reuyueth my spirites euen thorowoutly
Eche worde of her mouth not a preparatyue
But the ryght medycyne of preseruatyue
We be so ioconde and ioyfully ioyned
Her loue for my loue so currantly coyned
That all pleasures yerthly the treuth to declare
Are pleasures not able with ours to compare
This mouth in maner receyued no food
Loue is the fedyng that doth this body good
And this hed dispyseth all these eyes wynkyng
Longer then loue doth kepe this harte thynkyng

To dreame

To dyssent on my swete harte, loue is my leader
Loue is my lorde, and loue is my leader
Of all myne assayres in thought, worde, and dede
Loue is the Christ crosse that must be my spede.
¶ No louer nor loued.
¶ By this I perceyue well ye make rekenyng
That loue is a goodly and a good thyng.
¶ Louer loued.
¶ Loue good what yll in loue canst thou make appere.
¶ No louer nor loued.
¶ Yes I shall proue this loue at this tyme mentyoned
In this mans case as yll as is the deuyll
And in your case I shall proue loue more euyll
What tormentry coulde all the deuylles in hell
Deuyse to his payne that he doth not tell
What payne bryngeth that body these deuyls in that hed
Which mynisters alway by loue are led
He fryseth in fyre he drowneth in drought
Eche parte of his body loue hath brought abought
Where eche to helpe other shulde be diligent
They marter eche other the man to torment
Without stynt of rage his paynes be so sore
That no fende may torment man in hell more
And as in your case to proue that loue is
Wurs than the deuyll my meanyng is this
Loue distempereth hym by torment in payne
And loue distempereth you as farre in ioy playne
Your owne confession declareth that ye
Ease, drynke, or slepe euyn as lyttell as he
And he that lacketh any one of those three
Be it by ioy or by payne clere ye see
Deth must be sequell howe euer it be
And thus are ye both brought by loues inducyon
By payne or by ioy to lyke poynt of distruccyon

Which peynt apzaueth loue in this cafe paft
Beyonde the deuyll in turmentry to haue a caft
Foz I trowe ye fynde not that the deuyll can fynde
To turment man in hell by any pleafaunt mynde
Wherby as I fayd I fay of loue ftyll
Of the deuyll and loue, loue is the moze yll
And at begynnyng I may fay to you
If god hed fene as much as I fay now
Loue had ben Lucyfer and doubt ye no whyt
But experiens nowe hath thaught god fuch wit
That yt ought come at Lucyfer other then good
To whyp foules on the bzech loue fhall be the blood
And fewer he is one that can not lyue long
Foz aged folke ye wot well can not be ftroug
And an other thynge his phifician doth ges
That he is infecte With the biak fawndes.

Louer loued.

No ferther then ye be enfecte with folye
Foz in all thefe Wozdes no wozde can I efpye
Such as foz your parte any pzofe auoucheth.

No louer noz loued.

Foz pzofe of my parte, no but it toucheth
The difpzofe of yours foz where you alledged
Your parte aboue myne to be compared
By pleafures in which your difpleafures are fuch
That ye eate, dzynke, noz flepe, oz at moft not much
In lacke wherof my tale pzoueth playnly
Eche parte of your pleafure a turmentry
Wherby your good loue I haue pzoued fo euyll
That loue is apparauntly wozs than the deuyll
And as touchyng my parte there can aryfe
No maner difpleafures noz tozmentryes
In that I loue not, noz am not loued
I moue no difpleafures noz none to me moued

But all

But all displeasures of loue fro me absent
By absens wherof I quyetly content.

The Louer loued.

Syr where ye sayd and thynke ye haue sayde well
That my toy by loue shall bryng deth in sequell
In that by the same in maner I disdayne
Fode and slepe, this prouerbe answereth you playe
Loke not on the meat, but loke on the man
Now loke ye on me and say what ye can.

The No louer nor loued.

May for a tyme lous may pusse vp a thynge
But lackyng fode and slepe deth is the endyng.

The Louer loued.

Well syr tyll such tyme as deth approue it
This part of your tale may slepe suery whyt
And where ye by absent displeasure wolde
Watch with my present pleasure ye seme more bolde
Then wyse, for those twayne be farre dyfferent lewers.

The No louer nor loued.

Is not absens of displeasure a pleasure.

The Louer loued.

Yes in lyke rate as a post is pleased
Which as by no meane it can be displased
By displeasure present so is it trewe
That no pleasure present in it can ensewe
Pleasures or displeasures felyng sensybly
A poste ye knowe well can not fele possybly
And as a post in this cals I take you
Concernyng the effecte of pleasure in hande now
For any felyng ye in pleasure indure
More then ye say ye fele in displeasure.

The No louer nor loued.

Syr though the effectes of your pleasure present
Be more pleasaunt then displeasure absent

Yet howe compare ye with wyne absent payne
By present displeasures in whiche ye remayne.
Louer loued.
CMy present displeasures I knowe none such.
No louer nor loued.
CKnowe ye no payne by lous lytell nor much.
Louer loued.
CNo.
No louer nor loued.
CThen shall I shewe such a thyng in this purs
As shortly shall shewe herein your part the wurs
Now I pray god the deuyll in hell blynde me
By the masse I haue lefte my boke behynde me
I beseche our lorde I neuer go hens
If I wolde not rather haue spent forty pens
But syns it is thus I must goo fetch it
I wyll not tary, a fyr the deuyll stretch it.
Louer loued.
CFarewell barncock.
No louer nor loued.
CFarewell woodcock.
Louer loued.
CHe is gone.
Loued not louyng.
CGone ye but he wyll come agayne anone.
Louer loued.
CNay this nyght he wyll no more displease you
Gyue iudgemente hardelye euene whanne it please you
Which done syth he is gone my selfe streyght shall
Ryghtously betweene you gyue iudgement fynall
But lorde what a face this fole hath set here
Tyll shame defaced his foly so clere
That shame hath shamfully in syght of you all
With shame dryuen hens to his shamefull fall

Whenne

Wherin all though I nought gayne by wynnyng
That ought may augment my pleasure in louyng
Yet shall I wyn therby a pleasure to see
That ye all shall see the mater pas with me
What though the profyte may lyghtly be lodyn
It greueth a man to be euer trodyn
Nay whan I saw that his wynnyng must growe
By payne pretendyng in my parte to shewe
Then wyst I well the nody must cum
To do as he dyd or stande and play mum
No man, no woman, no chylde in this place
But I durst for iudgement trust in this case
All doubt of my payne by his profs by any meane
His rennyng away hath nowe scrapt out cleane
Wherfore gyue iudgement and I shall returne
In place hereby where my dere harte doths soiourne
And after salutacyon betwene vs had
Such as is mete to make louers hartes glade
I shall to reioyse her in merytydynges
Declare the hole rable of this fooles lesynges.

¶ Here the byle cometh in rennynge sodenly about the place among the audiens with a hye copyn tank on his hed full of squybs fyred cryeng watere watere, fyre fyre, fyre, water, water, fyre, tyll the fyre in the squybs be spent.

¶ Louer loued.

¶ Water and fyre.

¶ No louer nor loued.

¶ May water for fyre I meane.

¶ Louer loued.

¶ Well thanked be god it is out nowe cleane
Howe cam it there.

¶ No louer nor loued.

¶ Yf as I was goyng

To fet my boke for which was my departyng
There chaunced in my way a houfe hereby
To fyre which is burned pyteouſly
But meruelouſly the people do mone
For a woman they ſay a goodly one.
A ſoioner whome in this houſe burned is
And ſhoutyng of the people for helpe in this
Made me runne thyther to haue done ſome good
And at a wyndowe therof as I ſtood
I thruſt in my heed and euyn at a ſuſh
Fyre flaſht in my face and ſo toke my huſh.

Louer loued.

What houſe?

No louer nor loued.

A houſe paynted with red oker
The owner wherof they ſay is a broker.

Louer loued.

Then brek hart alas why lyue I this day
My derre hart is diſtroyd lyke and welth away.

No louer nor loued.

What man ſyt downe and be of good chere
Gods'body mayſter woodcock is goone clere
O mayſter woodcock fayr mot be fall ye
Of ryght mayſter woodcock I muſt nowe call ye
Mayſtres ſtande you here afore and rubbe hym
And I wyll ſtande here behynde and dubbe hym
Nay the chylde is a ſlepe ye nede not rock
Mayſter woodcocke mayſtres wood wood woodcocke
Where folke be farre within a man muſt knock
Is not this a pang trow ye beyonde the nock
Speke mayſter woodcock, ſpeke parot I pray ye
My leman your lady ey wyll ye ſee
My lady your leman one vndertakes
To be ſafe from fyre by ſlyppyng through a lakes.

Louer

Louer loued.

That worde I harde but yet I see her not.

No louer nor loued.

No more do I mayster woodcock our lorde wot.

Louer loued.

Unto that house where I dyd see her
I wyll seke to ses her and yf she be past
So that to apere there I can not make her
Then wyll I burne after and ouertake her.

The louer loued goeth out.

No louer nor loued.

Well ye may burne togyther for all this
And do well inough for ought that is yet amys
For goddes sake one ronne after and bast hym
It were great pyte the fyre shulde wast hym
For beyng fatte your knowledge must recorde
A woodcock well rost is a dysh for a lorde
And for a woodcock ye all must nowe knowe hym
By mater of recorde that so doth shewe hym
And brefely to bringe you all out of dout
All this haue I feyned to bringe about
Hymselfe to conuynce hymselfe euen by acte
As he hath done here in doyng this facte
He taketh more thought for this one woman nowe
Then coulde I for all in the worlde I make auowe
Which hath so shamefully defaced his parte
That to returne nother hath he face nor harte
Whiche sene, whyles he and she lese tyme in byssynge
Gyue ye with me iudgement a godes blessynge.

Louer loued.

The proke of my sayeng at my fyrst entre
That wretch bryngeth now in place in that I leyde
Dissymblyng mans mynde by apparence to be
Thyng inconuenient, which thyng as I seyd

As proued

Is proued nowe true, how was I dismeyd
By his false facyng the deth of my darlyng
Whome I thanke god is in helte and eyleth nothyng.
No louer nor loued.
¶ Syr I beseche you of all your dismaying.
What other cause can ye lay then your louyng.
Louer loued.
¶ My lonyng, nay all the cause was your lyeng.
No louer nor loued.
¶ What had my lye done yf ye had not loued.
Louer loued.
What dyd my loue tyll your lye was moued.
No louer nor loued.
By these two questions it semeth we may make
Your loue and my lye to parte euenly the stake
Louyng and lyeng haue we brought nowe hyther
Louers and lyers to ley both to gyther
But put case my lye of her deth were true
What excuse for your loue coulde then ensue.
Louer loued.
¶ Yf fortune god saue her dyd bryng her to it
The faute were in fortune and in loue no whyt
No louer nor loued.
¶ The hole faute in fortune by my sheth well ye
God sende your fortune better then your wit.
Louer loued.
¶ Well syr at extremyte I can proue
The faute in fortune as much as in loue.
No louer nor loued.
¶ Then fortune in lyke case with loue nowe ioyne you
As I with louyng ioyned lyeng euen now
And well they may ioyne all by ought that I se
For eche of all thre I take lyke vanyte
But syns ye confesse that your parte of such payne
Cometh

Cometh halfe by loue, and that it is certayne
That certayne paynes to loued louers do moue
In whiche the faute in nothyng saue onely loue
As dred and ielousy eche of which with me
To your estate of loue is a dayly fo
And I clere out of loue declaryng such chofe
As in my case no payne to me can grow
I say this considred hath pith sufficient
In proke of my parte to dryue you to iudgement

Louer loued.

Cnay fyrst a fewe wordes, syr though I confes
That loue bryngeth some payne and youre case payneles
By meane of your contented quyetnes
Yet thactuall pleasures that I posses
Are as farre aboue the case that ye profes
As is my payne in your ymagynacyon
Under the pleasures of contentacyon
Thus wade how ye wyll one way or other
Yf ye wynne one way ye shall lese another
But yf ye entende for ende to be breke
Joyne with me herein for indyfferent preke
A tree ye knowe well is a thynge that hath lyfe
And such a thyng as neuer feleth payne nor strefe
But euer quyet and alway contented
And as there can no way be inuented
To bynge a tree displeasure by felyng payne
So no felyng pleasure in it can remayne
A hors is a thyng that hath lyfe also
And he by felyng felyth both welth and wo
By dryuyng or drawyng all day in the myes
Many paynfull iorneys hath he in hyes
But after all those he hath alway at nyght
These pleasures folowyng to his great delyght
Fyll fayre washt at a ryuer or a weyre

And streyght brought to a stable warme and fayre
Dry rubbyd and chafed from hed to hele
And cozyd tyll he be lyke as an ele
Then is he lyttryd in maner nose hye
And hey as much as wyll in his belye
Then prouender hath he othes pese benes oz brede
Which fedyng in felyng as pleasaunt to his hede
As to a couetous man to beholde
Of his owne, westmynster hall full of golde
After which fedyng he slepeth in quyet rest
Dewryng suche tyme as his meat may degest
All this consydred, a hozs oz a tre
Yf ye must chose the one which wolde ye be.

No louer noz loued.

¶ When the hozs must to labour by our lady
I had leuer be a tre then a hozs I.

Louer loued.

¶ But how when he resteth and fylleth his gozge.

No louer noz loued.

¶ Then wolde I be a hozs and no tree by saynt Geozge.

Louer loued.

¶ But what yf ye must nedes stycke to the one.

No louer noz loued.

¶ Which, were then best, by the masse I can name none.

Louer loued.

¶ The fyrst case is yours and the nexte is foz me
In case lyke a tree I may lyken ye
Foz as a tree hath lyfe without felyng
Wherby it felyth pleasyng noz displeasyng
And can not be but contented quyetly
Euen the lyke ease is yours now presently
And as the hozs feleth payne and not the tre
Lykewyse I haue payne and no payne haue ye
And as a hozs aboue a tre felyth pleasure

So fele

So fele I pleasure aboue you in rate sure
And as the tre felyth nother and the hoys both
Euyn so pleasure and payne betwene vs twayne goeth
Syns these two cases so indifferently fall
That your selfe can iudge nother for perfyall
For indifferent ende I thynke this way best,
Of all our reasonyng to debarre the rest
And in these two cases this one question
To be the issue that we shall ioyne on.

No louer nor loued.

Be it so.

Louer loued.

Nowe are these issues chowsed so ny
That both sydes I trust shall take ende shortly.

Louer not loued.

I hope and desyre the same and syns we
Were fyrst harde, we both humbly beseche ye
That we in lyke wyse may haue iudgement furst.

Louer loued.

I graunt.

No louer nor loued.

By the masse and I come best or wurst

Louer loued.

Though nature force man stysly to enclyne
To his owne parte in eche partycular thyng
Yet reason wolde man whan man shall determyne
Other mens partes by indifferent awardyng
Indifferent to be in all his reasonyng
Wherfore in this parte cut we of affeccion
So that indyfferency be our direccyon.

No louer nor loued.

Contented with that and by ought I espy
We may in this mater take ende quickly
Sean we they: cases as she dyd apply them

That we may perceyue what is ment by them
He loueth vnloued a goodly one
She is loued not louyng of an vgly one
Or in his eye his louer semeth goodly
And in her eye her lober semeth as vgly
Her most delyred angels face he can not see
His most lotely hell hounds face she can not flee
He loueth, she abhorreth wherby presens is
His lyke, her deth, wherby I say euen this
Be his felyng payues in euery degre
As great and as many as he sayth they be
Yet in my iudgement by these cases hath she
As great and as many felyng payues as he.

Louer loued.

When mater at full is indifferently leyd
As ye in this iudgement haue leyd this now
What reason the tyme by me shulde be delayd
Ye haue spoken my thought wherfore to you
In peysyng your payues my consciens doth alow
A iust counterpayse and thus your payues be
A iudged by vs twayn one payne in degre.

Louer not loued.

Well syns your conscyens dryueth you thus to iudge
I receyue this iudgement without greke or grudge.

Loued not louyng.

And I in lyke rate, yeldyng vnto you twayne.
Harty thankes for this your vndeserued payne.

Louer not loued.

Now maystres may it please you to declare
As touchyng theyr partes of what mynde ye are.

Loued not louyng.

With ryght good wyll syr, and sure I suppose
Theyr partes in fewe wordes may come to poynt well
The two exlamples which he dyd disclose

All errous

All errous or doubtes do clerly expell
The estate of a tree his estate doth tell
And of the hors his tale well vnderstande
Declareth alwell his case now in hande.
For as nothyng can please or displeale a tre
By any pleasure or displeasure telyng
Nor neuer bryng a tre discontent to be
So lyke case to hym not loued nor louyng
Loue can no way bryng plealyng or displeasyng
Lyue women, dye women, lyuke women, or swym
In all the content, for all is one to hym
And as a horse hath many paynfull iorneys
A louer best loued hath paynes in lyke wyse
As here hath apered by sondry weys
Which sheweth his case in Wurst part to aryse
But then as the horse feleth pleasure in syse
At nyght in the stable aboue the tre
So feleth he some pleasure as farre aboue ye
In some case he feleth much more pleasure then he
And in some case he feleth euen as muche lesse
Betwene the more and the lesse it semeth to me
That betwene theyr pleasures no choyse is to gesse
Wherfore I gyue iudgement in short processe
Set the one pleasure euen to the other.

¶ No louer nor loued.

¶ Womanly spoken maystres by the roodes mother.

¶ Louer not loued.

¶ Who hereth this tale With indifferent mynde
And seeth of these twayne eche one so full bent
To his owne parte, that nether in harte can fynde
To chaunge pleasures with other must nedes assent
That she in these wordes hath gyuene ryght iudgement
In affirmance wherof I iudge and awarde
Both these pleasures of yours as one in regarde.

Louer loued.

Well syns I thynke ye both without corrupcyon
I shall moue no mater of interrupcyon.

No louer nor loued.

Nor I but maystres though I say nought in this
May I not thynke my pleasure more then his.

Loued not louyng.

Affeccyon vnbryoled may make vs all thynke
That eche of vs hath done other wronge
But where reason taketh place it can not synke
Syns cause to be partyall here is none vs amonge
That one hed that wolde thynke his one wit so stronge
That on his iudges he myght iudgement denyse
What iudge in so iudgyng coulde iudge hym wyse.

Louer loued.

Well myne estate sycht well contenteth me.

No louer nor loued.

And I with myne aswell content as ye.

Louer not loued.

So shulde ye both lykewyse be contented
Eche other to see content in such degre
As on your partes our iudgement hath awarded
Your neyghbour in pleasure lyke your selfe to be
Gladly to wysh Christes precept doth bynde ye
Thus contentacyon shulde alway prefer
One man to ioy the pleasure of an other.

Louer loued.

True and contentacion may be in lyke case
All though no helth yet helpe and great releke
In both your paynes for ye hauyng such grace
To be contented in sufferaunce of greke
Shall by contentacion auoyde much mysheke
Such as ths contrary shall surely bryng you
Payne to payne as paynefull as your payne is now

Thus

Thus not we loure but all the worlde beside
Knowyng them selfe or other in ioy or payne
Hath nede of contentacyon for a gyde
Hauyng ioy or payne content let vs remayne
In ioy or payne of other, flee We disdayne
Be we content welth or woe, and eche for other
Reioyse in the one and pyte the other.

Louer not loued.

¶Syns such contentacyon may hardely acorde
In such kynde of loue as here hath ben ment
Let vs seke the loue of that louyng lorde
Who to suffer passyon for loue was content
Wherby his louers that loue for loue assent
Shall haue in fyne aboue contentacyon
The felyng pleasure of eternall saluacyon
Which lorde of lordes whose ioyfull and blessed byrth
Is now remembred by tyme presentyng
This accustomyd tyme of honest myrth
That lorde we beseche in most humble meanyng
That it may please hym by mercyfull hearyng
The state of this audiens longe to endure
In myrth, helth, and welth, to graunt his pleasure.

AMEN.

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